

Perry County SWCD Rental Equipment

812-547-4686

Spreeder

Scraper

10 ft. No-Till Drill

7 ft. No-Till Drill

Aer-Way Caddy

Straw Crimper

Stock Water Tank Forms

Surelock Staple Gun

Rolatape Measuring Wheel

Tree Planting Bars

Erosion Netting

\$100.00 per day

\$100.00 per day

\$7.00 per acre

\$7.00 per acre

\$5.00 per acre

\$10.00 per day

\$10.00 per use

\$10.00 per day

\$10.00 per day


\$1.00 per bar

\$.20 per ft.

AD SPACE AVAILABLE

Looking for ways to get your business more exposure in the county and help the environment at the same time? Advertising space is available on this Perry/Spencer newsletter, which is sent to all program participants and affiliate members of Perry & Spencer Counties’ Soil and Water Conservation Districts.


Multiple packages available to fit your budget! Contact Kristin Moran, Spencer County SWCD District Coordinator, at kristin.moran@in.nacdnet.net or (812) 649-9136x3 for details.



Answers to Crossword Puzzle:

Across: 3. NRCS, 7. Ecology, 8. Wetland, 9. IDEM, 11. Survey, 12. SWCD, 13. ISDA, 15. Fertilizer, 16. Erosion, 18. Herbicide, 19. Livestock

Down: 1. Insecticide, 2. Agromony, 4. Soil, 5. Conservation, 6. No-till, 10. Mulch, 12. Sediment, 14. Crop, 17. Yield



TRAINING, CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

Water and Sediment Control Basin. A WaSCoB is a short earthen dam built across a drainage way that traps sediment and water for a 24 hour period. In the field

visited (belonging to Kevin Heckel), the WaSCoB was installed at the top of the grassed waterway. This reduces the sediment carried by the water as it flows down the

waterway.

For more information about grassed waterways or the Conservation Reserve Program, visit the Rockport Field Office.

WATER WISE Soil & Water Stewardship Week April 30–May 7, 2006

Water is vital to our life. It makes up over 60% of our body and 75% of our brain. Water helps make our every movement, thought and feeling possible. All of our food and most other products we use require water. It takes about 4,000 gallons of water to grow a bushel of corn and about 11,000 gallons for a bushel of wheat.

granted, but this precious resource may become increasingly scarce as we place more demands on fresh water supplies. To ensure future water supplies, we need to learn about water resources and plan to use them carefully. To help achieve this goal, National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) has chosen “Water Wise” as the theme for the 2006 Soil and Water Stewardship

W e e k celebration. Churches or schools interested in stewardship materials, please call (812) 649-9136 x3.





Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District

125 S. 8th St., Rm. 6

Cannelton, IN 47520

Spencer County Soil and Water Conservation District

2827 W. State Road 66, Ste. C

Rockport, IN 47635-9260

Spring 2006

Soil Scoop

Newsletter for Perry & Spencer Counties Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Volume 1, Issue 1



NEW STAFF RECEIVE FIELD TRAINING

Just two days after their annual meeting, Spencer County SWCD staff members Kristin Moran and Trish Dugas, along with Amanda Bough (Dubois County SWCD) participated in field training, co-led by Marylee Smith (NRCS Conservation Engineer Technician) and Amy Steeples (ISDA Resource Specialist). The day’s training focused on conducting Inspections & Evaluations (I&E’s) on grassed waterways for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Thanks to Kevin Heckel and Dr. Randall Stoltz, whose properties were visited during the training.

bowl-shaped channel to move water from the field to a ditch or stream. Sod-forming grasses are seeded into the channel to stabilize the substrate and help filter nutrients and sediment from the water coming off the fields.

WaSCoBs were also discussed. WaSCoB stands for

Continued on back cover



Left: gully caused by water erosion

Above: established grassed waterway

Below: Marylee Smith describes how WaSCoBs operate.

Right: Kristin Moran, Amanda Bough, and Trish Dugas measure and flag for a grassed waterway while Amy Steeples supervises.



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Perry County SWCD
125 S. 8th St., Rm. 6
Cannelton, IN 47520

Perry Co. Board of Supervisors

Randall Rennie, Chairman
Ronald James, Vice Chairman
James Fiedler, Secretary
Donald Champion, Member
Jeff Davis, Member

Associate Supervisors

Brad Harth
Jane James
Gilbert Kleaving
Earl "Mac" McCleerey

Perry County SWCD Staff

Darlene Fischer, SWCD Coordinator



Spencer County SWCD
2827 W. State Road 66, Suite C
Rockport, IN 47635

Spencer Co. Board of Supervisors

Mark Lubbehusen, Chairman
Burke Sibrel, Secretary
Mike Roos, Member
David Ayer, Member
Alan Waninger, Member

Associate Supervisors

Arnold Braun
Paul Giles
Ray Kern
Roy Raider
Steve Trinkel

Rockport Field Office Staff

Rita Schaus, DC, NRCS
Kristin Moran, SWCD Coordinator
Trish Dugas, SWCD Technician

2005 Perry County Plat Books

The Perry County 2005 plat books sell for \$15.75. They are sold at the Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District office in the Annex Bldg., Cannelton and the Records office in the Perry County Courthouse, Tell City.

PERRY/SPENCER COUNTIES EQIP UPDATE!

As this newsletter prepared to go to press, we learned that in the first round of funding two USDA conservation programs, EQIP and WHIP, Perry and Spencer Counties have been awarded nineteen new contracts that will bring over \$400,000 in cost-share dollars into the counties! We are very excited that NRCS will be assisting the Perry and Spencer Soil and Water Conservation Districts and our local land

owners and operators to put these conservation practices on the land. The cost share dollars will also generate income and work for local contractors, technical service providers, and local seed and fertilizer dealers. There are fourteen more applicants in the second round of funding that should know in early May if they'll bring an additional \$200,000 into our counties! Go conservation!

LINCOLN HILLS RESOURCE & CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT

Several projects are underway with the Lincoln Hills RC&D. In February, the Forestry Committee sponsored a Timber Industry Tour of the woodlands at the St. Meinrad Archabbey and held a banquet at the new St. Jude's Guesthouse with approximately 60 attendees. Father Guy Mansini spoke to the group about the history and future of the woodland management program for the Archabbey property. Special guest speaker, Jack Seifert, Indiana State Forester outlined changes in the State Forestry program. Grand champions and Reserve grand champions of the 4-H Forestry project were recognized from the 4 counties served by Lincoln Hills RC&D – Spencer, Perry, Crawford and Harrison. This committee will be completing a timber stand improvement project on a portion of the Hoosier National Forest on March 18, 2006.

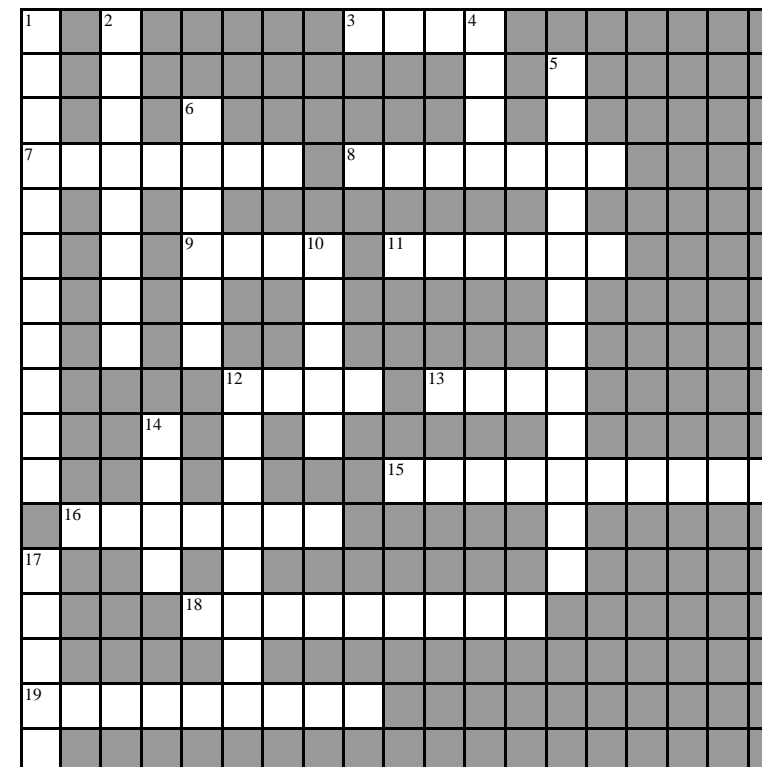
The Lincoln Hills Patoka Lake Recreation Region, a committee of this RC&D has been busy at Boat and Travel Shows in the region to promote southern Indiana as a vacation destination. Members of this committee represent businesses

in the southern Indiana area that provide recreational attractions in the area and promote tourism.

Plans are underway for the fourth annual Adventures With Nature program to be held at Tipsaw Lake in Perry County. This program is put together by a partnership of Spencer County SWCD, Perry County SWCD, U.S. Forest Service, DNR - Division of Forestry, Purdue Extension and Lincoln Hills RC&D. A morning of free outdoor presentations and exhibits are provided to visitors at Tipsaw Lake. The park has historically reduced their gate fee for visitors to the event.

The Fish and Wildlife committee has been busy building bluebird houses and getting ready for the Adventures With Nature program. This committee supplies building materials and guidance to youth as they build their own bluebird boxes. This is a very popular event. This committee plans to clean up some openings for the Hoosier National Forest this spring.

Council members have attended and joined committees in Spencer
Continued on Page 11



ACROSS

3. Federal partner in the Indiana Conservation Partnership.
7. The science of the relationships between organisms and their environments.
8. A lowland area, such as a marsh or swamp, that is saturated with moisture.
9. State regulatory department for Rule 5.
11. To determine the boundaries, area, or elevations of (land or structures on the earth's surface) by means of measuring angles and distances, using the techniques of geometry and trigonometry.
12. County partner in the Indiana Conservation Partnership.
13. State partner in the Indiana Conservation Partnership.
15. Any substance used to make soil more fertile.
16. The group of natural processes, including weathering, dissolution, abrasion, corrosion, and transportation, by which material is worn away from the earth's surface.
18. A chemical substance used to destroy or inhibit the growth of plants, especially weeds.
19. Domestic animals, such as cattle or horses, raised for home use or for profit, especially on a farm.

DOWN

1. A chemical substance used to kill insects.
2. The science, art, and business of cultivating soil, producing crops, and raising livestock; farming.
4. The top layer of the earth's surface, consisting of rock and mineral particles mixed with organic matter.
5. The protection, preservation, management, or restoration of wildlife and of natural resources such as forests, soil, and water.
6. A system for planting crops without plowing, using herbicides to control weeds and resulting in reduced soil erosion and the preservation of soil nutrients.
10. A protective covering placed around plants to prevent the evaporation of moisture, the freezing of roots, and the growth of weeds.
12. The largest pollutant, by volume, in our streams and rivers.
14. Cultivated plants or agricultural produce, such as grain, vegetables, or fruit, considered as a group.
17. A profit obtained from an investment; a return.

Answers are located on the back cover

Education Programs Available

Education programs are available for your class, scout troop or interest group.

Topics concerning numerous facets of soil and water conservation are available, including: water quality, wildlife, gardening, and recycling and more. Contact your district office for a brochure and registration form.

Do you have a specific subject matter in mind? Contact Kristin in Spencer County or Darlene in Perry County to tailor a program to fit your particular needs.



Crossword Challenge!



How many of the following terms related to soil and water conservation can you match with the definitions below?

RC&D, CONTINUED

County on the local Agriculture Economic Development Action Team. Working on the committees to explore whether bioenergy is a fit for Spencer County is one of the objectives of the council members. Other interests of the group are developing a marketing plan for Spencer County agricultural products

and to study the diversification opportunities and increase such opportunities of agricultural production in Spencer County. The staff at Lincoln Hills is working with Purdue University and the Indiana Tourism Office on a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Grant in producing a resource guide for

individuals starting an agri-business.

Along with these activities, the Lincoln Hills RC&D office provides assistance to the Natural Resource Conservation Service offices in Rockport and Corydon in support of the 2002 Farm Bill.

*- Betsy Wilkinson, Lincoln Hills RC&D
Assistant Coordinator*

Check out USDA’s Disaster Assistance Web page at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM SIGN UP

March 27- April 14
Contact Liz for details.



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

All participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land (HEL) that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise with complying with a conservation system are; renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, planting different crops such as soybeans, and changing or removing existing conservation practices. It is very important that you contact the FSA office before doing any of the above. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling or leveling - any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in loss of all Federal payments and eligibility.

ATTENTION PRODUCERS, LANDOWNERS!

- Do you intend to clear timber areas to create or to expand existing crop areas?
- Are you converting a pasture field into a crop field?
- Are there any areas on your farm(s) that you are considering cropping that have not been cropped in recent years?
- Is there a wet spot in a field that you want drained to make cropping easier?
- Are you disturbing a wildlife habitat area of any type?
- Are you doing anything different on your farm(s) this year?

These are Highly Erodible and Wetlands provision questions that need to be considered each year by producers to assure that they may remain eligible for USDA benefits. If you have any questions or concerns that something you plan to do on your farm could jeopardize your eligibility for benefits, please contact your FSA or NRCS representative before you begin work.

COUNTY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The five-member Spencer/Perry County Farm Service Agency committee meets once a month. The committee has established 8:30 a.m. on the third Thursday of each month as its regular meeting time and the Spencer/Perry County FSA office as its meeting place.

We will post a notice on the county office bulletin board if the committee must reschedule the time or place of its next meeting.

Dates to Remember	
Mar. 27	CRP sign up begins
April 14	CRP sign up ends
June 1	Sign-up ends for 2006 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program
Continues	MILC Program

Visit our Web site at: www.fsa.usda.gov/

SIGNATURE AUTHORITY REQUIREMENTS

County offices are required to verify that a signature authority is on file in the county office before accepting a signature on any program or related documents on behalf of another.

Producers can present evidence of signature authority such as presentation of the original document, such as corporate charter, bylaws, court orders of appointment, trust agreement, last will and testament, or articles of partnership.

The FSA-211, Power-of-Attorney form can also be completed to grant signature authority to another individual or entity.

Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office.

Spouses may not sign FSA-211 on behalf of the other. Spouses may also not sign on behalf of the other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities.

Producers need to contact their local county office for specific signature authority documentation needed.

INDIANA REGION 15 — NEWS FROM THE ANDERSON RIVER PROJECT

We have continued to collect water data and do many other things around the project area.

On March 23 we had a general meeting of stakeholders. The meeting was at the Indiana 15 RPC Office at 221 E. First St in Ferdinand at 7:00 P.M. Dubois – Perry or 6:00 P.M. Spencer time.

We met on March 28 to work on the Watershed Management Plan for about 1 hour to 1 ½ hours. We met at the St. Meinrad American Legion at 6:30 P.M. Dubois-Perry or 5:30 P.M. Spencer time.

We hope to see you at a tree planting demonstration and water quality issues field day on April 22. Meet at the St. Meinrad American Legion at 8:00 A.M. Free coffee and doughnuts. The field day will last until about 12 Noon. Space is limited, so contact Tom Mosley at (812) 367-8455.

Check our website at www.ind15rpc.org for meeting notices, updates, and general information on the project. Contact Tom Mosley at (812) 367-8455 for any other information.

- Tom Mosley

TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENT IN PERRY COUNTY

The Perry County SWCD Board of supervisors completed a Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) as an educational activity and to earn money for district. On Saturday, March 18 volunteers gathered at Charles Vollmer’s property in Perry County to complete TSI on 17 acres. The 19 experienced and non-experienced volunteers worked together to complete the project in less than 2 hours. Less desirable trees and vines were deadened to enable the residual crop trees to grow

quicker and larger and to produce a better quality wood for high-grade lumber.

Perry County SWCD has been conducting TSI projects since 1983. In 2001, the biggest project was 93 acres completed in 3 hours with the help of two other organizations. In 2002, 73 acres were completed with the help of the Perry Central Future Farmers of America. The amount of TSI acres determines if other organizations are needed to complete the project, which the net



Volunteers Front row, from left, Jodi French, Michael Kleaving, Darlene Fischer, Garth Steckler, Gavin Steckler, Teresa Rennie, Ed Denning and Houston Smith. Back Row, Vince Hagedorn, Ray Hagedorn, Seth Dupont, Randy Rennie, Jim Fiedler, Anthony Rennie, Dave Niehaus, Ronnie James and Danny Fischer.
Absent in picture: Rita Schaus, District Conservationist and Earl “Mac” McCleerey, District Forester.

Save the Date!

- March 27—CRP sign up begins
- April 4—Springtime on the Farm, Spencer Co. 4-H Fairgrounds
- April 14—General CRP 33 Signup ends
- April 14—Final Date for Producers with 2007 expiring CRP Contract to re-offer or extend
- April 17—Spencer County SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting
- April 22—Earth Day!
- April 22—Indiana Region 15 Field Day at St. Meinrad
- April 28—Arbor Day
- May 9—Perry County SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting
- May 15—Spencer County SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting
- May 17—Initial signup for Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) Program ends
- May 31—Final date to obtain Loans or LDP’s on 2005 harvested feed grains
- May 31—Crop reporting deadline (acreage reporting or certification date) for fall seeded small grains for certain counties (southern half of Indiana, call county office to verify your required date)
- June 1—Direct & Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) Enrollment Deadline without paying late filing fee
- June 13—Perry County SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting
- June 19—Spencer County SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting
- June 24—Adventures With Nature at Tip-saw Lake
- July 10-15—Perry Co. 4-H Fair
- July 15—Crop reporting deadline (acreage reporting or certification date) for all other crops, including CRP
- July 14-18—Spencer Co. 4-H Fair
- August 22—Perry Co. No-Till Day

profit is divided among the organizations helping. Always, immediately following each TSI, a meal and drinks are served at the site giving everyone a chance to rest and enjoy a conversation with others. TSI projects are selected on properties of landowners within the county who receive government cost-share.



BACKYARD CONSERVATION

Farmers aren't the only ones to practice conservation. A growing number of urban residents are taking part in backyard conservation, one way to help protect the environment. Whether you have rural acres in the county or a tiny plot of land in a city, you can perform a vital role in making the earth a beautiful place to live. Urban communities of all sizes face many issues involving land use today. As developers move outward into our farm lands and wooded areas, we tend to forget about the wildlife that already lives in these areas. By providing backyard habitats for a variety of wildlife species, we make it possible to co-exist in these ecosystems. This is beneficial every living thing and the Earth we share.

Several different types of practices are possible, depending on your budget, from a simple water pond to an elaborate wetland center with walking trails. Butterfly bushes offer simplicity if you don't have a lot of time to invest in your yard. Keep in mind when designing these habitats what types of wildlife you wish to see. Food, water, cover and a place to raise young are also very important. Backyard habitats help us to create a beautiful yard and help nature at the same time.



Tips for starting a Backyard Habitat:

- * Plan a design on paper: mark boundaries, where to put your plants, watercourses, and any decorative objects.
- * Keep in mind the four needs in a backyard habitat: Food, Water, Cover, Nursery (place to raise their young).
- * Pick seeds and plants according to the soil, water conditions, temperate zone and most importantly, what type of wildlife you wish to have visit your garden.
- * Don't forget the trees! Trees are an important source of food and shelter for animals.
- * Shrubs also provide excellent sources of food and shelter.
- * Offer small shelters like toad houses, cubby holes, brush piles, etc.

Then sit back and enjoy what nature has to offer you and your family.

More information on backyard habitats can be found at:
<http://www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/>

THE CHANGING OF TODAY'S WETLAND DETERMINATIONS

Perry & Spencer Counties recently lost our Resource Conservationist, Dave Drew to retirement in January of this year. We will miss Dave a great deal. Dave provided wetland determinations for 27 counties in Southern Indiana, and since his departure the USDA/NRCS has decided not to fill his position. This will cause an increase of workload on the District Conservationists of those affected counties. In response to the increased workload, the NRCS will be sending out legal letters of wetland determination. These will be determined using farm information, soil, and topographic information gathered by the districts. This information will allow the determination to be customized to fit the need of each farm requirement.

In order for Southwest Indiana NRCS employees to be able to handle the increased workload, NRCS will no longer do whole tract wetland determinations. A few employees have been trained to make certified wetland determinations. They will assist the local District Conservationists with the labels/certifications for *just the area* that is to be manipulated for agricultural purposes through removing native vegetation (trees) or adding new drainage in a previously undrained area. District Conservationists will also do some of the determinations. What does this mean for the landowner? You should be able to get your wetland determination more quickly. The local NRCS employees will be able to make

wetland determinations in woods on highly erodible land, fence rows of less than fifteen feet wide, and in other areas of less than 0.1 acres. If a landowner is still interested in a determination for his entire tract, he can hire a private wetland specialist or make a request through the US Army Corps of Engineers. In order to maintain your USDA program eligibility with the Food Security Act and comply with the Clean Water Act, contact us prior to performing the following activities:

- ♦ Land clearing
- ♦ Drainage (tile or open ditching)
- ♦ Drainage maintenance
- ♦ Filling, leveling, or dredging
- ♦ Land use changes

If you have any questions or concerns, please call (812) 649-9136, extension 3.



Spencer/Perry County USDA Service Center

Spencer/Perry County FSA
P.O. Box 47
Rockport, IN 47635
812-649-9136 (phone)
812-649-4796 (fax)
www.fsa.usda.gov/

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
CST

County Committee
Randy Kleaving
Cornelius Collignon
Jeff Vogel
Judy Sigler
Marty Williams

Staff
Liz Franz
Kim Hensley
Dona Stevenson
Mary Anne Schriefer



March 2006
Spencer/Perry County News

CCC-633 EZ FOR CROPS

Don't forget that the Farm Service Agency rolled out a new, streamlined process for requesting loan deficiency payments last August. The CCC-633 EZ is a combination of the original CCC-633 and the old, and now abandoned, CCC-709.

By signing the first page of the EZ form, producers indicate their intentions to receive LDP benefits. This one page covers all counties and all eligible harvested commodities for the entire crop year for the individual, joint operation or entity identified on the form.

One thing that hasn't changed is the requirement that the form must be signed before beneficial interest in the crop is lost. Once page 1 of the EZ form has been signed, the producer can submit an LDP request by completing page 2 at any time during the loan availability period — before or after losing beneficial interest.

Beginning with the 2006 crop year, CCC-633 EZ and eLDP online requests will be the only methods available to request LDPs.

DIRECT DEPOSIT MANDATORY

As of Jan. 1, 1999, all payments issued by the county FSA office will be by direct deposit (electronic funds transfer) to a pre-designated checking or savings account with your financial institution. Forms are available at the FSA office to sign up for direct deposit if you haven't yet. For those already signed up, it is important that we are notified anytime there is a change in your account number or financial institution. If we aren't notified, future payments can be delayed or lost for a period of time.

FSA HANDBOOKS ONLINE

For those interested in learning the nitty gritty of farm program implementation, help is on the way. The Farm Service Agency is making its handbooks available online. The Web site is <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/efoia/directives.asp>, and is available to anyone with Internet access.

Not all handbooks are online yet, but the list is growing. Over four dozen handbooks are now available, including 1-CM, Common Management and Operating Provisions; 2-CPR, Conservation Reserve Program, 1-DCP, Direct and Counter-cyclical Program; 1-NAP, Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program; and 1-PL, Payment Limitations.

SPOT CHECKS BY FSA

All CCC-501s (Members Information) and CCC-502s (Farm Operating Plan for Payment Eligibility Review) are subject to spot check through our end-of-year review process. If selected for a spot check, producers will be asked to submit proof of their contribution to the operation such as seed, fertilizer and chemical bills, land lease agreements, land contracts or property tax payments, equipment lists, cancelled checks for paid labor or hired management and any other items the FSA County Committee determine are necessary.

The producer is required to provide these items for the spot check so that the FSA county committee can make a determination that the farming operation is actually being performed as was stated on the applicable CCC-501 or CCC-502 that was originally completed.

NEW STRUCTURE TO BETTER SERVE INDIANA LANDOWNERS

In an effort to increase service to the landowner, the Indiana Conservation Partnership recently implemented a new technical service delivery model, Conservation Implementation Teams. Initiated by the Partnership's strategic plan and the leadership's dedication to cooperative conservation, this new structure leverages the Partnership's time and resources.

The new teams call for a flexible regional workforce of federal, state, and local employees working together, putting more conservation

practices on the land. Through these teams, we combine our workloads, eliminate duplication of effort, and strengthen our impact. This stream-lined structure gives our Partnership the flexibility to adapt as workloads and funding programs shift. This allows us to maintain the highest level of effectiveness at all times and expedite service to Indiana landowners.

Indiana State Department of Agriculture Division of Soil Conservation Resource Specialists' roles and responsibilities have changed due to this shift in structure.

FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR BRINE REMEDIATION

The Southwest Indiana Brine Coalition (SWIBC) is once again reminding landowners that there are funds available for remediation of brine damage to your soil. Our 319 Clean Water Act grant may end in September 2006, but this doesn't mean the end of the SWIBC. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Oil and Gas has made funds available for remediation. These funds are doing no one any good setting in an account and well may disappear if they are not being used.

The funds for remediation are funds that the grantors expect the SWIBC to spend. In the past, there have not been enough requests to expend all of the allocated money. Reasonable requests have all been approved in the past. The brine in the soil will only go away slowly, if at all, or may spread through runoffs or natural conduits without

remediation assistance.

Remediation projects will improve local water quality and possibly help improve scoring on some conservation programs. The Conservation Securities Program (CSP) will rotate in every watershed in the United States every eight years. This program is designed to pay incentives for conservation practices that are already implemented and maintained. Installation of practices such as brine remediation will mean money in an operator's pocket as well as more usable ground for the landowner.

Do you have bare spots from old oil and gas production on your property? Apply today to receive assistance with brine remediation. You will need to fill out a remediation application form and send it to the SWIBC. The SWIBC Executive Committee reviews

They will now focus on Conservation Implementation Team assignments and no longer serve as central contacts in their offices. Instead, landowners should first contact their local Soil and Water Conservation District when inquiring about services.

Landowners will reap the rewards of the Partnership's shift in conservation service. By increasing our effectiveness, we will be able to increase our service, bringing more conservation to the land and federal dollars to Indiana.

all applications. As stated on the form, signing this in no way commits you to carry through with remediation until you learn more about what will be done and your cost. Call Larry Hazlewood to receive an application or arrange for him to come to your home, discuss remediation possibilities, and assist you in filling out the form.

For assistance in brine damage remediation contact Coordinator Larry Hazlewood at (812) 789-1066, cell (812) 499-8768, or e-mail: larry.swibc@verizon.net. For information about the SWIBC call Chairperson Priscilla Kelly at (812) 838-0658, or contact your county Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The SWIBC is a locally led, grassroots organization and works under the not-for-profit 501(c)3 umbrella of Four Rivers RC&D Area, Inc.

JOHANNIS RELEASES NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
USDA'S GENERAL STANDARDS FOR DATABASE INTEGRATION ALSO AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON, April 6. 2006- Agriculture Secretary Mike Johannis today announced the release of an implementation plan that outlines timelines and benchmarks for the establishment of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), along with a plan for the initial integration of private and state animal tracking databases with NAIS.

"Developing an effective animal identification system has been a high priority for USDA and we've made significant strides toward achieving a comprehensive U.S. system," said Johannis. "We recognize that this represents one of the largest systematic changes ever faced by the livestock industry and we have welcomed suggestions from stakeholders to ensure that we continue to gain momentum. The plan we are releasing today will guide our efforts as we continue to work with our State and industry partners to implement a nationwide system."

The implementation plan continues to set an aggressive timeline for ensuring full implementation of the NAIS by 2009. It establishes benchmarks for incrementally accomplishing the remaining implementation goals to enable the NAIS to be operational by 2007, and to achieve full producer participation by 2009. Several important components have already been accomplished. These include the development of premises registration systems in each State and the issuance of guidelines for the manufacture and distribution of animal identification numbers. More than 235,000 premises are currently registered.

USDA is also releasing today the general technical standards for animal tracking databases that will enable integration of private systems with the NAIS. Private database owners are invited to submit applications for system evaluation to USDA and offer

feedback as the final technical requirements are established. USDA will then enter into cooperative agreements with owners of databases that meet the standards. The application for system evaluation and a draft cooperative agreement are available on the NAIS web site at www.usda.gov/nais.

By early 2007, USDA expects to have the technology in place, called the Animal Trace Processing System or commonly known as the metadata system, that will allow state and federal animal health officials to query the NAIS and private databases during a disease investigation. The animal tracking databases will record and store animal movement tracking information for livestock that state and federal animal health officials will query for animals of interest in a disease investigation.

Training sessions will be offered to organizations interested in distributing animal identification number (AIN) tags as either a tag manager or tag reseller. Two USDA-sponsored web conferences about the administration of AIN tags and a demonstration of the AIN Management System are scheduled for Thursday, April 13 at 1 p.m., and Wednesday, April 26 at 1 p.m., Eastern Time. Details of the web conferences are available on the NAIS web site.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is also finalizing \$3 million in funds that will be awarded to a number of States and Tribes to conduct field trials to analyze information pertaining to animal identification. Field trials will focus on the evaluation of new technologies for animal identification and automated data collection. APHIS will also fund an economic study focusing on the cost of NAIS implementation within a state; the development of procedures to measure the performance of identification devices and a bi-state study to

develop recommendations regarding livestock exhibitions to achieve compatibility with the NAIS.

APHIS has awarded approximately \$27 million in funds to States and Tribes to advance the national animal identification initiative. This funding has been used primarily for premises identification and registration. APHIS is updating a summary report detailing what has been accomplished through previously funded field trials and pilot projects. This report will be made public upon completion.

Throughout the establishment and implementation of the NAIS, USDA has engaged in extensive dialogue with producers and industry organizations across the country to gauge their views on animal identification. In April, 2005, USDA published a draft strategic plan and draft program standards for the NAIS and invited public comments on those documents. Industry-specific working groups have also been studying the issue of animal identification and will be making recommendations to USDA through an established advisory committee on how best to tailor the program to meet their industry-specific needs.

Additionally, USDA hosted a public meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, in November, 2005, to receive comments from cooperators and stakeholders on the animal movement tracking component of the NAIS. In total, these efforts have ensured that momentum continues to build around this important effort. USDA believes that it is critically important to develop the appropriate framework for the system to ensure successful implementation and wide-scale support.

The NAIS implementation plan, along with more information about the program, is available at www.usda.gov/nais.

This article courtesy www.usda.gov

USDA RELEASES REPORT ON SOYBEAN RUST DETECTION EFFORTS

WASHINGTON, April 3, 2006-- The U.S. Department of Agriculture today released a report that evaluates the early warning system for soybean rust surveillance, reporting, prediction and management during the 2005 growing season and concludes that information provided as part of the system helped to increase profits and mitigate damage caused by the fungus.

"Last spring USDA launched an early warning system to help ensure producers have easy access to all the best information and guidance on soybean rust," said Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns. "I'm pleased that our efforts have been successful and even contributed to increased producers' income. I encourage producers to continue their vigilance this year and use the soybean rust web site to help make informed decisions in managing soybean rust."

The report, "The Value of Plant Disease Early Warning Systems: A Case Study of USDA's Soybean Rust Coordinated Framework," examines the system that provides real-time, county-level forecasts of soybean rust detections in the United States to provide timely forecasts of soybean rust infections that could reduce yields.

USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) conducted the case study to evaluate the effectiveness of the coordinated framework, or early warning system. The study estimates that the information provided by federal, state, industry and academic partners increased U.S. soybean producers' profits by a total of \$11 million to \$299 million in 2005, or between 16 cents and \$4.12 per acre.

In 2002, USDA implemented a strategic plan in anticipation of a potential soybean rust find in the U.S., which established priorities of protection, detection, response and recovery. USDA agencies, including the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service; the Risk Management Agency and the Agricultural Research Service, partnered with soybean industry organizations, state departments of agriculture and many in the research and scientific communities to launch a coordinate framework.

Central to the coordinated framework is the USDA soybean rust Web site, according to the report. The one-stop federal resource provides farmers, crop consultants and others timely information on the extent and severity of soybean rust outbreaks and gives users up-to-date forecasts on where soybean rust is likely to appear.

The study uses USDA data on historical soybean yields, data from USDA's Agricultural Resource Management Survey, estimated soybean rust damages from Brazil and Paraguay, and spore dispersion estimates based on an aerobiology analysis and historical experience with wheat stem rust. Using National Agricultural Statistic Service data, information from a Government Accounting Office (GAO) soybean rust report and research conducted by agricultural analysts, ERS also concluded that the timely soybean rust forecasts mitigated damage through preventive management activities, which included fungicide application recommendations.

The GAO report released in March also praised USDA's efforts to provide timely information on Asian soybean rust detections. That report revealed that cooperators did a solid job of monitoring the disease and preparing America's farmers to handle outbreaks.

Soybean rust is caused by either of two fungal species, *Phakopsora pachyrhizi*, also known as the Asian species, and *Phakopsora meibomiae*, the New World species. The Asian species, first found in Louisiana in 2004, is the more aggressive of the two species, causing more damage to soybean plants. During the 2005 growing season, the fungus was found in 9 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. In the current growing season, it has been found in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Texas.

To view the USDA report, visit the ERS Web site at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err18>.

The one-stop resource, www.usda.gov/soybeanrust, provides timely information on the extent and severity of soybean rust outbreaks in the United States, Caribbean basin and Central America. It provides users up-to-date forecasts on where soybean rust is likely to appear in the United States, reports where the disease exists by county, refers growers to county extension agents nationwide, lists the National Plant Diagnostic Networks laboratories and links to other web sites to give producers effective disease management options.

This article courtesy www.usda.gov



HOW THE TECH TEAM WORKS IN YOUR AREA BY CHRIS LEE, TECH TEAM LEADER

Indiana NRCS is in its third year of utilizing the Technical Services Team for surveying, designing, and construction checking your conservation practices. You may have noticed some of these individuals on your farm. This year there has been a new addition to the team approach and we have modified the name to reflect the changes. Indiana recently developed the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA). The ISDA has a Division of Soil Conservation with four of its employees located within the boundaries of our team. You may know some of these employees from when they were with the DNR. The combining of the NRCS and ISDA employees, along with our district employees, we have decided to call the team the Conservation Implementation Team (CIT). Using this team approach and modern tools like GPS, Total Station, and Utility Vehicles, our efficiency is improving every day. Our goal is to become as efficient as possible in providing high quality conservation practices that we all

can be proud of. Your District Conservationist (DC) is still the first line contact for all information about your conservation plan, program or project. Your DC will notify the team of all jobs needing assistance. Your project will be scheduled and serviced as quickly as possible after the referral is made.

Please, help us to help serve you better. Here is how:

1. Provide the DC with as much notification as possible before beginning construction on your project (Three days minimum).
2. Make sure your job has been staked out in its proper location before commencing construction.
3. Communicate any discrepancies you see to your DC as soon as possible.
4. **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Please, remember that contractors are builders. Builders such as block layers and carpenters are always skilled in the use of a level. Your contractor should be too. Most levels today are

lasers and are much easier to use than the older types. Your contractor should be able to check the grade and elevation of your project the same way your builder did when they built your house or pole barn. Could you imagine a building or home built without the use of a level on a regular basis throughout the construction? We may only have the time to check your project one time. If the project is not constructed within the allowed tolerances your project may not be approved for cost-share payments. To ensure your project will be approved and you can be reimbursed in the least amount of time, ask your contractor to get out the level and check the work as it is being constructed.

If you have any questions about the Conservation Implementation Team (CIT) or about your conservation plan, contact Rita Schaus, your District Conservationist, at (812) 649-9136 x3 or by cellphone (317) 373-2155.



Front: Linda Powell—Gibson Co. SWCD, Amanda Bough—Dubois Co. SWCD, Joel Lindley—NRCS, Chuck Froehle—NRCS, Trish Dugas—Spencer Co. SWCD. Middle: Mary Lee Smith—NRCS, Gary Seibert—ISDA, Amy Steeples—ISDA, Bill Kutter—Knox Co. SWCD, Dale Ficklin—NRCS, Junior Spires—Vincennes. Back: Rob Brown—ISDA, Dave King—NRCS, Chris Lee—NRCS, Jeff Spurlock—NRCS, Chuck White—NRCS, Don Ryan—ISDA.